

# A Life of Worship

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Preacher: Chris Mitchell

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, we have an opportunity, often during the summer months, to bring in for you a number of guest speakers, maybe a friend of BK's here and there. And we've got another friend of BK's here this morning.

But the good news is it's also a friend of yours. So you're used to hearing a familiar message from an unfamiliar face. You're going to hear a familiar message from a familiar face this morning. And so I'd like to invite forward Chris.

So Chris Mitchell, if you have not gotten to know him, if you're fairly new to the church, is one of our elders here, along with BK and myself. And this is going to be his inaugural sermon.

So just as we ask the kids for a tent, you know, we pray for attentive ears for the kids. I want to pray that for us as well, that the Lord may just give us a sense of attentiveness to the word of God here this morning.

Let me pray for you, Chris. And Father, I just thank you that you have given us this brother in Christ, Chris, and that as he preaches your word, as he speaks to you, as he speaks to your people, that you may guard his mouth, let him say exactly what needs to be said.

[ 1 : 15 ] May you give us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand the word of God that you have given to him. Amen. Amen. Do I have this thing on upside down? There it is. All right.

So that's an indication of just what you have before you this morning. It is an amazing thing to be up here and a testament to what God's done in my life, actually.

And, you know, I think quickly of my second favorite book, which is Pilgrim's Progress and of his journeys as a Christian. And some of them land him in some pretty tough spots.

And at other times, they're great spots and times of rest and peace and such. And so like Pilgrim, here I am in an unexpected place.

So Shane was saying to me when I first came in, Chris, are you really preaching on Revelations 4 and 5? That is brave. And I agree, but I am not.

[ 2 : 32 ] And so Shane, yeah, thanks for that. He's become a great friend for me, with me and to me in the youth ministry. And I think Nick was just excited to hear Revelations 4 and 5.

So, Nick, you're going to have to defer to somebody more qualified for that. So, yeah. So thank you. Thanks for being here. And, you know, last bit of my diatribe here, just chatting with Dustin just before the sermon and just reminded that certainly I won't do this perfectly, but it is an offering of worship.

As our pastors faithfully preach every single Sunday, they don't do it perfectly either. But each time it's an act of worship. And I wonder if that's the focus sometimes we need to have is, you know, what is being done here?

How are we contributing? It's an act of worship. It's not a service. So let me pray for this sermon very quickly and offer it up to the Lord. Lord, I guess this was your plan.

And here I am. And you know firsthand that I will not do this perfectly, but thank you for the opportunity. And I pray that this will be glorifying to you.

- [ 3 : 47 ]     Amen. All right. So thanks for reading Revelations 4 and 5, Dave. The purpose of reading that was to cast a comparison on what heavenly worship looks like.
- So worship in its perfection looks something like what John wrote down there in Revelations 4 and 5. Very different in some ways than what we experience here on earth.
- And yet we are, for those of us who are believers, we're part of that. Whether we worship on heaven or on earth, eventually we will all be worshiping in heaven.
- And that's what we'll be doing. And it will be wonderful. And it'll be perfect. But we certainly can learn some of what's described there and apply it here to our lives on earth.
- And so the gist of my sermon, it's called A Life of Worship, is that our lives are to be permeated by the worship of the Lord. Basically everything we do in all of our lives are to be reflected by a life of worship.
- [ 4 : 54 ]     So while you dwell on that, I'm going to set a timer for myself. So in this sermon, I want to establish four main points.
- One is that we were created to worship. Two is that worshiping the one true God changes us for the better. Three, that worshiping idols and false gods changes us for the worse.
- And four, what worship looks like in the church. One, we were created to worship.
- Two, that worshiping the one true God changes us for the better. Three, that worshiping idols and false gods changes us for the worse. And four, what worship looks like in the church.
- One, we were created to worship. So I'm just going to, some of my points, I'm going to highlight what we teach to youth. I think that's just an extra benefit, you know, for those of you, you'll get some insights into what we teach to youth.
- [ 5 : 52 ]     We know from the business world that you have to tell somebody seven times, typically, before they absorb the message. And I would imagine there's some semblance of truth to that here as well.
- Also, I can't promise you that each of your youths can quote these truths back to you. Some of them have approached seven times and others, you know, one or two times. But it is nevertheless what's being taught to your youth.
- So your youth should be able to tell you that we were created for worship. The first reference I draw upon is John 4, verses 22 to 23. But maybe I'll read out Isaiah 43, 7, which says, So we were created with that inclination.
- And I was a missionary kid in rural West Africa. And when we showed up there, even though I was a baby, at the time, people were worshiping. Out in the middle of West Africa, they were worshiping.
- You get dropped into the Amazon jungle somewhere, they're worshiping. You go anywhere on this earth and somebody is worshiping. We were created with that inclination.
- [ 7 : 01 ]     And, of course, what happened that threw us all off was sin back out of the garden, right? And so we had this creation, this perfect creation where God built us to worship.
- And that became misdirected through sin. And as a result, you have people scattered all over the world, still worshiping per how we were created. But worshiping what?
- Most of them something other than the one true God. So we have the creation misdirected through sin, still made to worship, but now in a battle against worshiping all the wrong things.
- That collides with God's redemption. So how do we come back and worship the one true thing, which is God? It's through redemption. That's how we end up in the right place, worshiping the right thing.

That's how that's corrected from the sin that occurred at the beginning. John E.A., who is not that well known, but his credibility comes from the church that he teaches at.

[ 8 : 07 ] His father is the lead pastor down at a grace church in California. I thought I would quote some of these guys because they can explain it a lot better than I can. He said, And 1 Peter 2.9 says, But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

So everything that we do or contemplate as it relates to worship is Christ and what he did for us on the cross. That's what the whole Bible is about.

Sometimes we forget, similar to coming to church and almost viewing it as a service, what am I here to get? We often look at the Bible and go, what story is there to tell here? It's all about the same thing. Right from the beginning in Genesis right to the last book of Revelation, all relates back to the same gospel message.

And it's amazing the parallels and the prophecies that all play a role in that as you get to know your Bible better. Romans 12 verse 2 says, Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

So my conclusion on this section that we were created to worship is that we were made to worship, but can only do so rightly if we are redeemed. In which case, our lives need to be permeated by worship of him.

[ 9 : 47 ] So that's step one. We were created to worship. On to number two. Worshiping God changes us for the better. So this same Johnny A. from Grace Church of the Valley says, Living a life of worship represents the fundamental purpose for why we were redeemed.

If you are a Christian, you are redeemed. If you are redeemed, you will be inclined towards worship. And I put a note for myself here.

Beware the heart and the enemy. So sometimes what we do is when we fall out of worship, as we are inclined to do, because we sin, even as saints we sin, beware of the heart and the enemy.

Sometimes the issue can be a heart issue. Sometimes the primary issue can be an enemy issue, because he loves to make us trip. Or sometimes it can be a combination of both.

And I'll speak a little more to this later, but just beware of the heart and the enemy as it relates to worship. The Westminster Catechism states, What is the chief end of man?

[ 10 : 56 ] To glorify God and to enjoy him forever. And in terms of worshiping God changes us for the better. The Westminster Catechism, I think, really, this statement really sort of consolidates in my mind quite simply.

What is our purpose? And I'll get into how the world struggles with purpose in a little bit. But it's to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. And the first step of that, of course, is salvation, which takes us back to the gospel message.

Because we are created to worship, worshiping God through our lives produces good with eternal implications. And I'll reference Luke 3, verse 17 here.

His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn. But the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. So on the one hand, as it relates to salvation, those of us who are saved, we're family.

We're going to be together with eternity. And that's amazing. That's just an amazing hope. And, of course, it falls upon us to teach the best of our abilities for those who are not.

[ 12 : 11 ] The gospel message is this. We sinned. We owe. We owe God because of that sin.

And Jesus is the one that came and paid that debt. So as I explain it to the youth sometimes, it's kind of like racking up a whole bunch of, in a very simplistic way, a whole bunch of credit card debt.

And you're just absolutely buried with no hope beneath it. And somebody comes and just wipes it clean. Except way, way better than the credit card scenario, of course. And Jesus did that on the cross, of course.

And then he came back to life. He resurrected. And then he ascended to heaven. And he's coming back again in a very different way than he came the first time. First time was a servant king. Next time is a warrior king.

And that's when time will be up. And so that's the first piece, which is the salvation part and how worshiping God changes us for the better. We have an eternal destination to look to and look forward to.

[ 13 : 14 ] The eternal destination in heaven, 2 Corinthians 5, verse 1 says, For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

It's amazing. And I'm sure most of you can identify with this periodically when you can actually cast your eyes towards heaven. There are points where you can see that more realistically than others.

It's absolutely mind-blowing. But we'll typically go from day to day. And we'll go through our devotions. And we'll attend church, all of which is wonderful. But there are just times when you can see that more clearly than others.

And as a believer, wow, does that fill you with hope. The second major piece pertaining to glorifying God, enjoying him forever, that changes us for the better, sanctification.

And this is just represented, again, so well through Pilgrim's Progress. You see this guy starting from the beginning and making very simple mistakes. And then later on, he's tricked up by a tree that has fruit growing over his path, but he knows very well the trunk is on the wrong side of the road, the wrong side of the wall.

[ 14 : 22 ] And he eats that, and he pays for it. These are the types of trips and falls that we have, sin that occurs in our life as we travel along.

And sanctification, of course, is that process of change that God takes us through. Progressive sanctification, he changes us to be more like Christ over the course of our lives.

And that's an amazing thing. And that explains in part why I'm up here. It's not because Chris did a whole bunch of good stuff and good things, and he's super clever. No, God just changed my heart and did a bunch of things.

And here I am trying to serve him, and hopefully he gets the glory for this message. 2 Timothy 2 verse 21 says, Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

I've identified a few real benefits to the progressive sanctification in practical ways. One is the freedom. Romans 6 verse 6 says, We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

[ 15 : 38 ] That speaks to the freedom. And it's an amazing freedom when you can cast off the burdens of this world, the mistakes you've made, the hurt other people have placed upon you, whatever the case may be.

But the freedom that comes from worshiping the one true God is an amazing thing. A simple sort of example of that is money, right? The Bible speaks quite a lot about money, and one particularly scary verse says, For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.

Just one example. But we know that by following the Lord Jesus Christ with our heart, mind, and soul, we become free of charge, that something like money could place upon us.

Not limited to money, but one example. The other piece is purpose. So many of you have heard me talk about this to nauseam, so here it is again. And for those of you who haven't, welcome to this story.

Purpose. Our lives represent a perfect purpose. And the world aches for this. So as much as everyone was created for worship, and they're scrambling around trying to find something to worship, the other, the dovetail to that is the purpose.

[ 16 : 51 ] And so I used to meet with these businessmen all around, from all around Vancouver City, and we would come together. And the idea was to learn from each other business, right? And then you'd have speakers come in to, you know, that's supposed to teach you how to achieve better sales, and, you know, marketing, or whatever the case may be.

But at the end of the day, they all got exhausted of that. They realized that their lives were in ruins. They had more money than they knew what to do with, and they were starved for purpose. So they started bringing in the hokiest and craziest speakers you've ever heard of from all over the world who had found the latest, greatest thing to worship, and to come and speak to them about how to achieve purpose.

That's essentially what their lives were brought back around to. So purpose is another piece to sanctification that is achieved. And the final piece is fruit.

Romans 6, verse 19 says, For just as you once were slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to salvation.

Galatians 5, 22 and 23 says, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. And so there's a lot there.

[ 18 : 00 ] But as you become sanctified as a benefit to how God changes us for the better, you get to enjoy these fruit, and so does everyone else around you. And it's an amazing thing.

Finally, how are we guided towards worshiping God, given that it does change us for the better? The Westminster Catechism again says, What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?

The Word of God. And we all know that to be true. John 1, 1 says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

So, I guess, to that point, the Word of God is everything. The Word of God, of course, is what steers us in these ways.

And sometimes we create hang-ups for ourselves. And I'll be quick on this one, but, I mean, I know I've done that many times, where it's like, Oh, yeah, the Word of God says this. Now, I'm super smart, so I'm going to interpret it in all of these ways.

[ 19 : 05 ] And usually that ends up in a pit, in the wrong place. And there are many sermons that can be preached on this, you know, in terms of the validity of the Word of God.

Inerrancy of Scripture is something we've covered a couple of times with youth. But it is, it's the critical piece upon which all of our understanding and growth takes off.

It is the way in which God has chosen to message us at this time in history. And so it's a critical piece to know that it's absolutely true. Sometimes we fall into various traps of self-developed hang-ups.

Often this is linked with worldly wisdom. If you don't know what that is, study it up. It's essentially thinking you're super smart and applying all the latest, greatest trends or insights from the world to develop your own logic around a given point.

Sometimes we can say, you know, show me the verse, show me the verse. You know, I've been there. If you could just show me the verse. And, you know, where a lot of that can be addressed is further study the Bible.

[ 20 : 04 ] And particularly under teachers and preachers who know the word super well. So submitting to BK, submitting to Dave and the extensive knowledge they have. And others that I'll quote here in a little bit.

They will help you. They will help you understand. Some examples, once you start thinking along those lines. Sometimes we get into, if only God had written down the rules clearly.

And you think, wait a minute, he gave us the Ten Commandments. That was pretty clear. He wrote them in stone tablets. You kind of go, oh, if only God would appear in person. Then that would just remove any doubt. And, man, I would just follow him like wildfire thereafter.

He did. And then we killed him. And, you know, there's primary issues. One of the primary issues that we have to believe to be a Christian is in the Trinity.

There's no single verse that says, here's how the Trinity works. Right? So I guess all of that to round out and say, the word of God is the word of God.

[ 21 : 05 ] It's how he's chosen to speak to us right now. It's perfect. Follow it. Submit to those who know it better than you do. That's just part of being a church family. I'm going to do a time check here.

All right. I'm on track. Worshiping. So first one was we were created to worship. Second one was worshiping God changes us for the better. Third one is worshiping idols changes us for the worse.

Even good things become idols when we make them too important. Again, referring back to money. My point in the message today is not to get hung up on money, but the Bible talks about money a lot. Matthew 6.24 says, No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and money. Or Squamish recreation, which is not in the Bible, but I added that there. Idols. They're everywhere. The reality is that whatever the idol, it is rooted in something that replaces God as supreme.

And sometimes we joke about Squamish recreation. Squamish recreation isn't typically the idol. It's something under that. We're using the recreation to address that idol, feed that idol, right? And sort of reflecting on how important or how seriously God takes idolatry.

[ 22 : 22 ] God is a jealous God in Exodus 25. The Ten Commandments. No other gods before me. And no carved images. Exodus 20, verses 3 to 6.

Idolatry is later listed in both Colossians 3.5 and Galatians 5.19-21. I just list those because they're particularly impactful. Idolatry is spoken about throughout the Bible. Idols are an abomination to the Lord.

We all have them, and their removal happens over the course of our sanctification. So the good and bad news is that if you are saved, you are now on a trajectory of progressive sanctification.

If you're on a trajectory of progressive sanctification, there's a high likelihood that God's going to start removing idols. And, you know, where I've been most helped is investing in the church.

Brothers and sisters in Christ will help spot and support through dismantling of your idols. The dismantling itself is God's work, of course. Winston T. Smith from the Marriage Matters book out there, which is an amazing book on marriage.

[ 23 : 34 ] But if you're not married, you could read it proactively, but it also applies to relationships elsewhere throughout your lives in a pretty impactful way.

You know, the more you read, the more you realize everything is interconnected. So I would encourage that. Anyway, he says, all of our problems with God can be understood as worship problems.

That which you serve with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength shapes every area of your life. So when we taught the youth on marriage, we put up a simple diagram I had never seen until, I don't know, five or six years ago maybe.

But it's pretty impactful. It's just triangle. God's at the top. Husband's on the left. Wife's on the right. And, of course, as each one of you grows closer to God, you grow closer together. And certainly Lisa and I have known that to be true.

And so I'll re-quote that. All of our problems with God can be understood as worship problems. That which you serve with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength shapes every area of your life.

[ 24 : 36 ] So our marriages and relationships suffer when we worship something other than God. And he contends that a lot of the time we're having relational problems is because we have a worship problem with the Lord.

Relationship problems are worship problems. Loving something more than loving God. And I believe, this is my last point, Solomon's idolatry.

So in terms of the seriousness of idolatry and how that permeates your lives, you have the wisest man on earth and the richest man on earth setting up false idols and making all kinds of mistakes.

Not limited to, but including with women. And that wreaked havoc. The only reason God didn't rip his kingdom from him was because of the love God had for his father, David. Wreaked all kinds of havoc.

Now, my insightful little son, Bronson, says, Dad, if he was the wisest man on earth, how come he was doing all that stuff? Good question. I'll get back to you. John Piper says, listen to, if you're looking for somebody to listen to, listen to John Piper.

[ 25 : 47 ] He's a great one. Let your joy be this, that you are saved. Be more deeply, more durably, more gladly, more pervasively, more unmistakably, more irrepressibly thrilled that you are saved than that you are gifted or competent or productive or successful or famous or powerful or fruitful, even in the name of Jesus.

And we know this to be true. I think we, the last part of that statement, we have all known people who strive in ministry out of their own strength.

That's something I constantly question my own self. Chris, is this in the flesh? Chris, are you just pouring yourself into this to look good somehow? Are you, oh, you just think that this thing's not going to work without you sort of inserting yourself there?

Constant, constant questioning there. Because we know that, you know, whether it be our hearts or the enemy or both, ministry itself can become something of the flesh and can be a real trip up to not only ourselves, always remembering those that it affects around us.

Final point. So we've covered, we've covered we were made to worship. Worshiping God changes us for the better.

[ 27 : 03 ] And worshiping idols changes us for the worse. My last point is what worship looks like in the church. And why did I choose the church? There are, as I said, worship is to permeate our lives.

So when we're going to sleep, when we're waking up, when we're bike riding, you name it, our worship of the Lord our God is to permeate our lives.

And I think we only have to look back at Revelation 4 and 5 to see not only how serious worship is, but how glorious it is. And the church is something that serves a particular function in that worship, which is the reason why I chose it.

A life of worship is one in which Christ permeates all aspects of our lives. This does indeed include praying at night, listening to sermons during the day, nature walks to reflect on his grandeur.

None of these replace church. A construct for corporate worship that God directed through the apostles. This is why I'm touching on it. So by corporate worship, it is the worship together of the one true God.

[ 28 : 07 ] Not with just a friend or two, not to be underestimated. That's a wonderful way of worshipping, but this is a way of coming together as the local body of believers and worshipping him in a specific way. I'm not going to get hung up on church history here.

And by hung up, I don't mean that it's not important. I just mean I have 10 minutes left. In the New Testament, where did the church come from and what does it represent? Sometimes we can get hung up on all the usual hang-ups.

So I referenced my comments earlier. Don't get caught in this. Just as there is not one clear verse laying out the construct of the Trinity, neither is there one laying out the construct of the church. It takes study. It takes submission.

Tim Challey says, The local church was founded by God for the purposes of God and the glory of God. Our task is not to define it according to our own desires or anyone else's, but to learn how God defines it, then to follow him in obedience.

Ultimately, the church exists to bring glory to his name through worship, discipleship, and evangelism. In this way, and so many others, the local church is God's plan. It is the hope of the world.

[ 29 : 11 ] The apostles started it, a whole bunch of stuff and acts on it. Peter was commissioned in Matthew 16, 18. And of note, that was the same Peter that denied him three times, right?

It shows God's grace, it shows God's purpose, it shows God's sanctification in our lives. Then there's many letters to the churches. Some of them were broken churches. Some of them were healthy churches.

Much to read on this. This essentially established earthly corporate worship that parallels heavenly worship. I would highlight that point as significant. Parallels heavenly worship. It doesn't replace it, but it is, in fact, parallel to it.

God is being worshipped in heaven by heavenly beings right now. And right now, all over earth, he is also being worshipped by his creation. Side tangent.

Quick. By the way, just like in Paul's time, there will always be issues in churches. So your youth should be able to tell you, although we may not, I think I have said this seven times, that if you haven't been hurt by the church, get ready.

[ 30 : 20 ] You're going to be at some point. And the reason for this is, despite even those of us who are saints, we still sin. There's lack of wisdom. There's just all kinds of hurt, as described in the Bible, that we will inevitably commit against each other.

So expect it. And then pursue guidance in addressing it like the Bible teaches. It's sort of as simple as that. If you're surprised by getting hurt by the church, don't be.

And address it per the church's instruction. That should not be something that turns you away from the church, et cetera. I've hurt both of my kids before. And yet they, I don't think they've rejected me yet.

So that's that. And I can't impress upon that. Sometimes, again, we get hung up on, oh, the church hurt me, so I can't. I don't mean to make fun of that because there can be profound hurt.



But that should not disconnect you from the Lord, from his church, and it should be addressed in a biblical way. Corporate worship, which is church, follows Jesus' direction, modeled to deliver the following.

- [ 31 : 31 ] Regular gathering, assembling of people, mutually affirm each other as Christians, preaching the gospel, participating in baptism, per Matthew 28, 19, and the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians 10, 17.

It's a critical linkage here. I think it's critical. I made it, though, so you judge for yourselves. A Christian's heavenly membership in the universal church.

So the universal church, as we taught the youth, includes all believers, past and present. So it's not just those of us sitting here today. It's all believers, past and present.

A Christian's heavenly membership in the universal church needs to show up on earth. Just like a Christian's imputed righteousness in Christ should show up in works of righteousness.

So there's a parallel there, right? A Christian's heavenly membership in the universal church needs to show up on earth. The salvation or imputed righteousness that we experience needs to show up in works.

- [ 32 : 30 ] Works does not save, but your lives change after you are saved and you want to serve him. And I can speak with confidence and authority in that because that's me. To summarize the relationship, the universal church creates local churches, while local churches prove, give evidence for, and protect the universal church.

The local church is the visible earthly outpost of the heavenly assembly. And one step for, I'm going to do a quick time check, guys. All right.

Commonalities of the local church with that revelation worship passage that I picked up on, that David read for us there, focus on in complete orientation towards God. Gathering of believers.

And prayer, song, and instruction. Conclusion. Conclusion. If our local church is part of heavenly worship and serves a unique critical component to our lives of worship, all aspects of church are to be rooted in worship.

A.W. Tozer said, A church that is soundly rooted cannot be destroyed, but nothing can save a church whose root is dried up. No stimulation, no advertising campaigns, no gifts of money, and no beautiful edifice can bring back life to the rootless tree.

- [ 33 : 45 ] So some questions for all of us, and these are questions that challenge me. Preparing of the heart. Do we pray for soft and worshipful hearts before we start church?

The primary way by which to mitigate hard-hearted preferences or criticisms. Greeting and hospitality, which I have a direct role in, which I've grown to love.

Do we yearn to meet and greet our brothers and sisters in the Lord? And does that shine through? Do we overflow with joy and welcome to new attenders and unbelievers?

Junior church. Do we teach with earnest the truths of the gospel? Or are we watching the clock, wishing the kids would settle down? If we look at these things as points of worship, all of those questions, some of them being administrative, some of them just being preferential, go out the window.

When we're teaching the little kids as an act of worship, who cares how long it lasts? I mean, do your best to manage that they can hear the truth, but who cares how they're behaving?

- [ 34 : 49 ] It's not easy for me, a guy who likes to run a tight ship, but, you know, these are true. Singing. Singing.

Do we sing in order to glorify God and remind ourselves of gospel truths? Preaching. The sermon in corporate worship is not after worship or before worship.

It is worship. So the sermon. And this gets into things like preferences. Oh, I don't quite like the music at that church. Or, oh, I don't like the way that pastor looks or says things or whatever the case may be.

When it's an act of worship, that goes out the window. As long as he's preaching faithfully the truth of God, preferences can largely go out the window. It's an act of worship between you and God to be engaged in these things.

Tithing. Giving back to God some of what he's given to us. Of note, don't be fooled into thinking that God needs our money. God doesn't need our money. God can instantly provide us with as much money as we need instantly without any trouble at all.

[ 35 : 59 ] Again, it's the act of worship. It's the heart he's after. Sometimes we think, oh, we just got to scramble and we got to. Nope. No, we don't. We do need to earnestly work in what he has set before us with soft hearts.

Fellowship. Fellowship. Do we enjoy the brothers and sisters we'll be spending eternity with? Do we take an opportunity to encourage them? So my last point is this.

God gives different churches different gifts. Took the youth out to Cloverdale one night. Man, that is a fancy church. And they have great preaching as well.

And it's just a wonderful place. And we're going back in November, I think. Anyways, they have like a built-in gym there. They have like, you name it, they've got it. And it's beautiful.

That is no way a criticism. In fact, I would say by the looks of it, they've used their resources wisely. Why did God give them all those resources? I don't know. That's his business.

[ 37 : 05 ] But God doesn't need our money. He needs our heart. He wants our hearts. He gives different churches different gifts. Musical. If you've got a Sabian, which we have and other churches don't, you put them in front of people.

Right? As an example. If you have strong singers with a soft heart, then that's what you use.

But don't mistake yourself. God doesn't need beautiful music. He needs soft hearts. There's a difference. So he gives different churches different gifts and we're to use them wisely.

Same. We happen to have biblical counseling. The whole Christian world is scrambling out there to get a hold of biblical counseling. And we have one in-house. It's amazing. And so we use it.

Talent will never make up for hard hearts. Akin to God saving. Not us. God performs the function of saving. We don't.

[ 38 : 08 ] Akin to tithing out of worship and not because we believe God needs our money. Charles Spurgeon said, and so this is back in Charles Spurgeon days. I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church.

And I believe that the fundamental difference is that heart. That softness of heart. And that worship. This is not a place to render services.

This is a place to worship the Lord. And every aspect of what we do is for that. So who cares how long the sermon is? Even though BK spoke me words of wisdom in advance saying, hey, typically first sermon guys go too long and they get waffling, which I'm already dabbling with.

And so wisdom. J.D. Greer said, without the mission, a church is not a church. It's just a group of disobedient Christians hanging out. In closing, a life of worship is what God demands, expects, and in his grace grows us toward.

Let me pray. Lord, thank you for this opportunity to meet as believers within the design that you produced for us, Lord. And you do demand our worship.

[ 39 : 26 ] And for reasons I do not understand, you accept our imperfect versions, Lord. Thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins.

And I pray for soft hearts, Lord. And I pray that you will use this church mightily for your glory. In your name, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.